



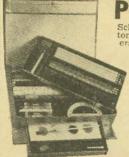


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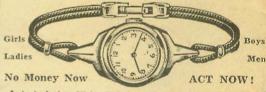


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HI, CANDY! CAN SURE, BOB! WHAT IS IT?
MINUTE?

TED ASKED ME TO
TELL YOU HE'D DRIVE
YOU HOME AFTER ANY MORE, BOE
PRACTICE! BY THE
WAY, HOW'S TINA
DOING? I KNOW SHE
HAS HER HEART SET
ON IT... AND I ER...

TINA ... WELL, SHE'S THE OLD NOT IN THE RUNNING GLAMOUR ACT, ANY MORE, BOB! IT'S IF I'VE EVER A SHAME... SHE SEEN IT!





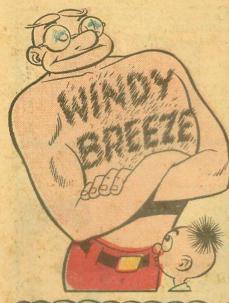






























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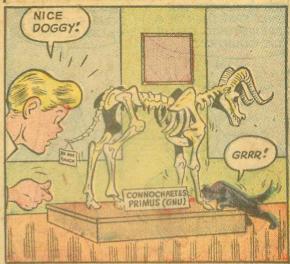






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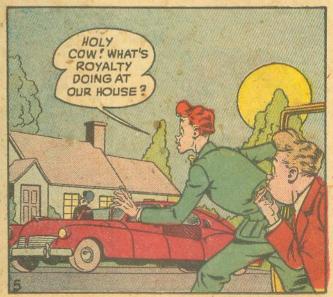






















# Country Style Style

AS the door of the Sweet Shoppe swung open, the kids inside looked up with interest. Candy O'Connor stood in the doorway with a strange girl. Everyone had heard that Candy's cousin was paying her a visit, and as the two girls came in, the boys and girls stared at each other. The usual whistle accompanied the entrance, but it was a whistle strictly from surprise. This figure following Candy was definitely no wolf bait.

"Uh... let's sit here, Cousin Susie." Candy slid into à booth with her eyes lowered. "Two banana royales," she called to Herbie, who stood behind the counter.

"Say, that sounds good enough to eat! Get it? Ha-ha-ha!" Susie's voice matched her appearance. Penetrating and twangy, it was straight from the hills. It was as conspicuous as her red hair, and the red dress that clashed with the hair. The whole effect, so different from the teen-age style approved by the youth of Hartwick, seemed to shout "country." She didn't really wear a sunbonnet, but she gave that impression.

As for Candy, that O'Connor glitter was under a cloud. The kids could sympathize. No one would want to tow a country cousin like Susie into the local juke mill. Candy's friends were willing to stand by her, though. First Trish, Candy's best friend, carried her Chocolate Dream over to eat it in the booth with them. Then some of the other kids came by to meet Susie. Candy smiled gratefully. Friends were wonderful! And really, when you got to know Susie, she was a nice girl. It was just that she was so different from the Hartwick crew.

Candy began to relax. The ice was broken, and Susie obviously was enjoying herself, giving out with her own particular brand of "corn." Everything was fine—until the door of the Sweet Shoppe opened again to admit a new arrival. Candy's back was toward the door, and her first warning was when she heard a drawling voice.

"Hel-lo, Herbie! What's the huddle in the corner?"

Candy stiffened, and looked around. Yes, it was Cornelia Clyde. And where Cornelia was, there was likely to be trouble.

"Looks like a fire!" Cornelia continued. "Or could that red possibly be hair?"

Susie broke off in the middle of a sentence. A blush ran over her skin, adding yet another shade of red to her outfit. Candy's eyes flashed, while Trish gave out with a "meow."

"Something that Candy O'Connor dragged in, no doubt!" Cornelia continued in a scornful tone.

Susie's eyes filled with tears, but she tried to blink them back. "Your . . . your friend has quite a sense of humor!" she said.

Candy had never liked Susie better. She admired her for trying to treat the thing as a joke. "I couldn't disagree with you more!" she smiled at Susie. "She isn't my friend—and she isn't funny! In fact she's corny—I mean, Cornelia!"

"Yes," said Cornelia, changing her tactics and smiling sweetly. "I'm Cornelia. And you must be Candy's cousin we've heard so much about! And how nice that you could be here for the big dance tonight! I suppose Candy has you all dated up for it?"

As Cornelia waited for an answer, her smile changed to pure sarcasm. Candy could only glare, for Corny had hit upon Candy's big problem.

"Why-I-don't know . . ." Susie stam-

"Well, no doubt I'll see you there tonight!" Cornelia exclaimed. She turned and sauntered out, satisfied with the confusion she had created.

"Come on, Susie. We'd better go home too," Candy said. She got up, and Susie followed her out into the street.

"Look, Cousin Candy," Susie said as they

walked along. "About that dance tonight. You don't have to worry about me. I—really—you go, and I'd just as soon stay at home!"

Before Candy could reply, there was a squeal of brakes and a jalopy slid to a stop beside them. Candy greeted Ted Dawson absently, while she made a resolve to herself. Not only would she see that Susie went to that dance, but she was determined to show her a fine time! Yet how to carry out the resolution, Candy didn't know.

The girls climbed into the car. Ted had met Susie already, so introductions were not necessary.

"I stopped by the Sweet Shoppe," Ted explained. "Trish told me you'd just left."

Candy could see from his expression that Trish had told him, too, about the scene with Cornelia. Well, that would save words... for Candy had decided to explain the problem of the dance to Ted and enlist his help. She thought she could count on Ted.

"Look!" she said to him. "This affair of the dance is really crucial! Susie's been in town such a short time that she hasn't had a chance to meet any boys—but you can get her a date, can't you?"

"Yeah," Ted said in a flat, absent-minded voice. Actually Ted was busy with a lot of thinking, but to Candy and Susie it sounded like plain indifference.

"Ted!" Candy yelled angrily.

"Uh—sorry!" Ted said. "You just leave things to me, Candy. You and Susie be ready to go, and I'll show up with a date tonight."

"It wouldn't have hurt you to sound a little more enthusiastic," Candy muttered as the car stopped in front of her house. But Ted drove away without replying. Was he letting her down?

Once in the house, Candy turned into a whirlwind of activity. "I'm going to set your hair," she informed Susie. "And I have a dream of a new formal—never worn, so no one'll know it's mine. It may need fitting, so try it on now."

"Really, Candy," Susie pleaded miserably.
"I—I appreciate it, but I think I'd rather wear
my own dress. And I don't believe my hair

will look very well, set,"

But Candy wore down all opposition. At last Susie stood before Candy and her mother for approval, her hair coaxed into a sleek style and her plump body encased in the shining satin of Candy's dress. Candy and her mother exchanged glances—hopeless glances. Susie had been right. Her hair didn't become her, and the dress only emphasized her freckles and her sunburned skin.

"I hate to sound ungrateful," Susie said in a small voice, "but I don't think it's a bit of use for me to try to be something I'm not!"

"You win!" Candy groaned. Out came the set from the red hair, leaving it to curl all over Susie's head. Off came the dress, replaced by a short, full-skirted affair of Susie's own. Candy had to admit Susie looked better—but she didn't have that sophisticated glamour that was so desirable!

Ted arrived with a tall, pleasant-faced boy for Susie. He and Candy explained to Susie that this dance was the Surprise Ball given by Ted's club every year.

"It'll be a surprise this year, all right!" Ted grinned. "As a matter of fact, we switched ideas at the last minute. I spent all afternoon arranging it."

Approaching the dance, Susie became more and more nervous. The doors swung open and they heard the first strains of music. Candy's eyes popped with surprise and Susie's face lighted up. "Country style!" Susie gasped.

Inside, the Down-Homers' Band was giving out while a leader called the sets for a square dance. Most of the girls were having trouble managing their long, tight frocks in the complicated maneuvers, but Susie was right at home. Her red curls danced and her feet danced too, for she was an expert at this type of thing. She was in her element, and the boys crowded around her.

Candy, stopping to catch her breath in the middle of the evening, saw Cornelia Clyde standing against a wall sulking. Cornelia had never bothered to learn to square dances. Besides, her dress was too tight. "Ted," Candy said, "sometimes I almost begin to think you're a genius!"

Ted winked happily back at her.























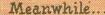












BILL LOVEJOY'S
MOVED IN ON CANDY THING, TED!
ONCE TOO OFTEN! HE BESIDES,
NEEDS A TRIMMING
DOWN! CAN I COUNT
ON A SLIGHT ASSIST
FROM YOU, CUTHBERT
OL' PAL?

SURE
THING, TED!
TO DATE
TRISH
LAST
WEEK!







GLEEPS! I NEVER

































































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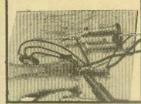
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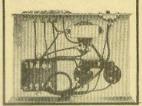
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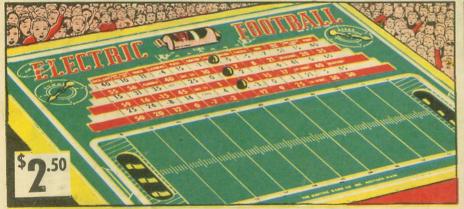
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